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SOV AMBASSADOR in Mexico expresses condolences on death of Kennedy.

SECRET PRIORITY 1181, 23 NOV 9PM

IN ACCORDANCE WITH CUSTOM HERE NEARLY ALL AMBASSADORS IN MEXICO CALLED ON ME YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND LAST NIGHT TO EXPRESS CONDOLENCES ON DEATH PRESIDENT KENNEDY. THE POLE SIGNED BOOK IN EMBASSY CHANCERY LATE LAST NIGHT BUT HE AND CZECH DID NOT CALL UNTIL THIS MORNING. RUSSIAN WAS LAST TO CALL PRESUMABLY BECAUSE HE WAS AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS.

WHEN RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR SEMION T. BAZAROV CALLED THIS AFTERNOON HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY COLONEL ALEXANDRE G. SIDOROV AND FIRST SECRETARY SVIATOSLAV F. KOUZNETSOV WHICH IN ITSELF IS UNUSUAL AS CALLS ARE USUALLY MADE BY AMBASSADORS ONLY. ALTHOUGH THE AMBASSADOR CUSTOMARILY SPEAKS IN RATHER HALTING SPANISH OR ENGLISH HE MADE POINT OF SAYING HE WISHED TO SPEAK IN RUSSIAN FOR PRECISION. SPEAKING THROUGH KOUZNETSOV, WHO TRANSLATED INTO SPANISH, HE THEN DELIVERED HIMSELF OF ORATION. COLONEL SIDOROV GAVE APPEARANCE OF CLOSELY MONITORING BOTH RUSSIAN AND SPANISH STATEMENTS. GIST OF REMARKS WAS THAT DEATH OF KENNEDY WAS A GREAT BLOW TO WORLD PEACE AND DISARMAMENT AND THAT RUSSIAN PEOPLE AND SOVIET GOVERNMENT, WHO ESTEEMED KENNEDY AS A FRIEND AND STATESMAN, SHARED SORROW OF UNITED STATES.

I HAD IMPRESSION THEY HAD CAREFULLY REHEARSED THE CALL IN ADVANCE AND WISHED TO SAY NOTHING EXCEPT WHAT HAD BEEN REHEARSED.

Expressed condolences of death of Pres. Kennedy. JJ

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